

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

DATE: May 25th, 2017

HONORABLE GUSTAVO A. GELPI, U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE

**CASE #: 12-CV-2039 (GAG)**

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

VS.

GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO ET AL

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**MINUTES FOR ON-SITE INSPECTION OF PRPD FACILITIES IN PONCE, PR:**

Following the approval of the Agreement in this case on July 17th, 2013, the undersigned has visited various Puerto Rico Police facilities, such as the main headquarters, area precincts, and K-9 and equestrian facilities. Such periodic visits, accompanied by the TCA and PRPD officials allows the Court to obtain a complete and hands-on picture of the progress of the Reform, during the capacity building process, now into its third year.

On May 25, 2017, the undersigned conducted an announced on-site visit of PRPD facilities in the Ponce region. These included the Ponce Police Headquarters ("*Comandancia de Area*"), the Drugs and Narcotics Division, and the Transit Unit. The TCA and members of his team, a USDOJ representative, and, PRPD Area Coronel Hector Agosto and his staff were present at all times.

Much to the satisfaction of the Court, PRPD surpassed all capacity building expectations in the Ponce region, insofar as officer training is concerned. This, of course, is the result of the Police Academy's quintessential role as the backbone on the Police Reform. Accordingly, the undersigned strongly cautions the Government of Puerto Rico, during the transitional period of Law 20 of 2017, to carefully look at all the excellent progress that the Academy has brought to date. Any changes --

surely the prerogative of the Administration, as long as consonant with the Agreement -- should, thus, take into account where the PRPD was three years ago and where it is today. The Court is adamant to allow this progress to rewind, and end up where it all began in 2013. More so, even the ACLU and Civil Rights Commission, during the May 22, 2017 public hearing, highlighted positive changes within the police rank and file, as a result of the Academy and continuous trainings. Thus, changes (if any) in Police education going on forward, should build upon what is now an excellent model, proven to work.

The Court was also impressed at the prompt effectiveness the Area Use of Force Review Board. Also, the Ponce Area's Community Engagement demonstrates a striking and most positive paradigm shift as to how PRPD officers see themselves as part of the community they have sworn to protect , and equally important, how the Community and its representatives interact with the Police, and are even included in precinct meetings.

Finally, the Court notes the important work of the Ponce Drug and Narcotics unit, as well as Transit Division. The personnel are well trained and dedicated officers. It is the court's hope that as part of the Reform additional equipment and tools, as well as modernized information technology, will further assist these officers to be even more effective.

To conclude, Kudos to Coronel Agosto and all the men and women from the Ponce Area -- a model of excellence within the Police Reform.

The Court, in the months ahead, will continue to conduct on site visits. The Governor's Personal Representative, attorney Alfonso Orona, shall deliver to Governor Rosselló copy of this minute for his review.

**SO ORDERED.**

This 25<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2017.

s/ Gustavo A. Gelpi

Gustavo A. Gelpi  
U.S. District Judge